

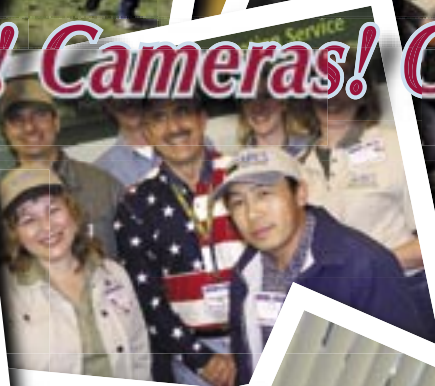
California **CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS**

Preserving The Past, Enriching The Future

Cultural Resources Management



*Focus On NRCS At World Ag Expo
Lights! Cameras! Conservation!*



Meet The New Deputy!

Welcome To Calif., James Tillman



A Message From State Conservationist Chuck Bell

Welcome to **James Tillman**, our new Deputy State Conservationist! I'm really happy to have James on-board. I am very impressed with James' work and his ability to communicate with our folks. Please take time to talk with James about your projects and concerns as he travels throughout the state.

Thanks to **Curtis Tarver** for taking the lead in organizing and emceeing the Black History Month celebration at the State Office on February 27th. It was a wonderful opportunity

to recognize African Americans' contributions to our nation and agency. It was also a time to reflect on historic milestones that have been invaluable lessons to all Americans.

Speaking of celebrations, NRCS Calif. recently received our "Initial Allocation" funding allotment. For those unaware, EQIP, one of NRCS' key Farm Bill programs, was funded at over \$45 million! You may recall that three years ago the same program was funded at about \$7 million in Calif. The Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) was also significantly increased to \$700,000. The Farm and Ranchlands Protection and Grassland Reserve programs are about the same as last year at \$3 million and \$1.6 million, respectively. We also received the "green light" to begin funding the EWP program in southern Calif. We anticipate expending about \$150 million over a three-to-four-year period treating soil erosion, debris and tree removal.

Much thanks to **Dave Heilig, Charles Davis, Bill Ward, Bill Cunningham**, and the many others who have laid a strong foundation for program delivery.

Thanks to **Helen Flach** and the many other NRCS staff who coordinated the Conservation

Security Program listening sessions held in Sacramento, Fresno and Indio in February. All of these programs and activities are great opportunities for NRCS and our partners to ensure that the public knows who we are and understands our vital mission.

Our Public Affairs staff have really been doing a great job researching and developing brochures, fact sheets, reports, videos and other products to help the public and legislators better understand NRCS's mission and accomplishments. We are distributing creative and informative products. Keep up the good work! We are all doing our part when we clearly display the NRCS logo on our vehicles, maps and publications we develop. We want the public to instantly recognize our name and logo.

At a recent State Leadership Team meeting in Riverside, I distributed a State Conservationist's "Vision" paper. I really do believe in the power of a vision. Articulating and sharing a vision is vitally important, but having others—as a team effort—implement and realize those goals is indispensable! If you have not had an opportunity to read the goals outlined in the vision paper, I hope you will soon. I need your help for NRCS Calif. to accomplish these goals.

In This Issue

	Page
A Message From State Conservationist Chuck Bell	2
Welcome To Calif., James Tillman	3
NRCS, Four Other USDA Agencies Offer "One-Stop Shopping" In Redding	3
Maderan Wins National Earth Team Award	4
Everyone Benefiting From Montague Clean Water Project In The Klamath Basin	4
'Round The State	4
NRCS Outstanding Range Conservationist Of The Year Named	5
NRCS Scores Points At "The Super Bowl"	5
To Air Is Human, To Clean Up Divine	5
Cultural Resources Management: Preserving The Past, Enriching The Future (Part 1)	6
Lights! Cameras! Conservation!	6
Black History Month Commemorates Landmark Case	7
In Focus	7
A Citizen's Water Quality Monitoring Program	7
Caligrams — Statewide News In Brief	8
HR — Personnel Actions	8

On the Cover

Lights! Cameras! Conservation! photos by Brian Ziegler (article on page 6). *Cultural Resources Management and Welcome To Calif., James Tillman* photos by Jim Cairns (articles on pages 6 and 3, respectively). *Design: Jim Cairns*

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"I think it's critical that we have a good sense of what the field offices are involved in," says James Tillman, "and that we listen." Photo: Jim Cairns

Welcome To Calif., James Tillman

By Jim Cairns
Public Affairs Specialist/Davis

James E. Tillman joined NRCS Calif. on February 23rd, as the new Deputy State Conservationist, replacing **Hank Wyman** who retired in January 2003. He is located in the State Office in Davis.

Tillman, a longtime career employee with nearly 22 years service between NRCS and the Soil Conservation Service, most recently served as Assistant State Conservationist for Programs and Acting State Administrative Officer with NRCS in Temple, Texas, for the past four years.

"My favorite part of coming to Calif. is, of course, the opportunity to work with the people. I love working with people," he emphasized with a big grin. "And the

challenge of taking on a new position," he adds. "Especially one that is very, very demanding and rewarding."

Tillman obtained a B.S. degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff in 1984. He previously served as Assistant State Conservationist for Resource Assessment and Technology with NRCS in Illinois, and also worked in positions in Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma. Additionally, he has served as soil conservationist, district conservationist, resource conservationist, and USDA/1890's Liaison.

James and his wife, **Patricia**, have three children: **Tiffani**, 19, **Simone**, 15, and **James Jr.**, 13. They are currently looking forward to residing in Elk Grove and possibly get in some skiing before the season ends.

NRCS, Four Other USDA Agencies Offer "One-Stop Shopping" In Redding

New USDA Service Center to serve 1,000-plus Shasta County customers

By Dave Sanden
Area Public Affairs Specialist/Red Bluff

Government officials, partners, and other VIPs gathered on February 4th at Redding's new USDA Service Center to celebrate the dedication of the building and new opportunities open to customers by co-locating five USDA agencies under one roof.

After an official welcome that included a color guard, National Anthem, and invocation, each of the six speakers took turns at the podium.

Among the speakers were **Luana Kieger**, NRCS Special Assistant to the State Conservationist, **John Smythe**, FSA State Executive Director, **Roger Trindale**, Area Manager USDA Rural Development, **Michael J. Pohlmeier**, City of Redding Mayor, and **Jack Blackwell**, Regional Forester Pacific Southwest Region, USDA Forest Service.

NRCS's Luana Kieger spoke of the benefits of "one-stop shopping" for customers, and summarized the agency's conservation role in Shasta County. "The Redding Service Center will serve well over 1,000 Shasta County farmers, ranchers, and non-industrial private

timber landowners," noted Kieger. "The Redding NRCS office has responsibility to provide technical assistance to landowners on over 1,325,000 acres of private land. This land base is used to support a diverse agricultural economy that produces over \$50 million annually in agricultural commodities," continued Kieger. "Assisting these landowners make wise land use decisions in managing their natural resources is a primary focus of NRCS."

When the talking ended, the ribbon cutting began. Mayor Pohlmeier, assisted by Smythe and Blackwell, wielded a giant pair of scissors to cut a long green ribbon to officially open the Service Center.

After the ceremony there was an open house, and participants had an opportunity to explore the facility. The attending media showed a keen interest in NRCS, with a local TV news reporter extensively interviewing Redding District Conservationist **Bob Bailey**. "We are very happy about the move," said Bailey. "Our customers will appreciate not only the convenience but also the wide array of USDA services available under one roof." The interview aired on KRCR-TV News that evening and sound bytes aired throughout the next day on KQMS-AM radio.



Redding D.C. Bob Bailey (above) was extensively interviewed by news media at the dedication ceremony. Luana Kieger (below) said, "This new USDA facility will allow our NRCS employees to serve our customers more efficiently for years to come." Photos: Dave Sanden





Maderan Wins National Earth Team Award

By Brian Ziegler
Area Public Affairs Specialist/
Fresno



Jenny Gabor, the NRCS West Region's Earth Team Employee of the Year. Photo courtesy of Brian Ziegler

Restoring wildlife habitat, mapping noxious weed infestations, and removing litter from the Merced and Fresno Rivers were some of the projects tackled by Earth Team volunteers in Area 3 last year. The NRCS employee who led the effort, Madera Soil Conservationist **Jenny Gabor**, has been named 2003 West Region Employee of the Year.

Gabor was honored for developing an ambitious volunteer program, which included producing volunteer handbooks, organizing awards

functions, and serving as Chair of Area 3's volunteer committee. "The committee was formed in order to provide a knowledge base within NRCS about the Earth Team program," Gabor says. "The goals of the committee were recruitment, retention and recognition."

Gabor says she had her own reasons for making the committee a success. "One

of my personal goals was to make it easier for field offices to manage volunteers because we're experiencing such a large workload due to conservation and technical assistance programs."

There are approximately 150 volunteers in Area 3. They range in age from high school students to retirees. They often work together on projects, something Gabor likes to call "knowledge transfer." In fiscal year 2003, they donated almost 15,000 hours to soil and water conservation. Nationwide, Earth Team volunteers logged more than one million hours in fiscal year 2003, representing \$16.6 million worth of conservation-related service to NRCS and the country.

The deadline to apply for the 2004 Earth Team awards is October. Interested NRCS employees and volunteers can send an application to California Earth Team Coordinator **Rachel Lopez** at the State Office in Davis.

'Round the State



A local news celebrity found his way to the NRCS exhibit at the World Ag Expo in Tulare. Pictured above are, front, from left: Pam Nielsen, KMPH-TV Weatherman Kopi Sotiropoulos, Chu Yang; rear, from left: Eric Crook, Joe Williams, Elizabeth Palmer, Jenny Gabor. See article on page 6. Photo: Brian Ziegler



Helen Flach, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, (above, left) and State Conservationist Chuck Bell listen to comments from the public about the Conservation Security Program during a meeting in Fresno. The testimony will help the NRCS develop final regulations for program implementation. Photo: Brian Ziegler



Soil Scientist Edd Russell (above, right) discusses NRCS careers with high school students. He was an exhibitor at the Farms Leadership Conference held at the University of California's Kearney Agricultural Center in Parlier. Photo courtesy of Edd Russell



By Dave Sanden
Area Public Affairs Specialist/
Red Bluff

Within the Klamath Basin in Siskiyou County, a Shasta Valley rancher and NRCS are working to address several resource concerns simultaneously while helping the City of Montague dispose of wastewater in a fish-friendly way.

Through an agreement with rancher **Don Meamber**, the city uses a 60-acre pond on the ranch to store wastewater, which is then used to supplement irrigation water for Meamber's irrigated pastures. When overfilling

Everyone Benefiting From Montague Clean Water Project In The Klamath Basin

of the pond during winter months raised concerns over water quality in the nearby Shasta River, the city sought a way to use and filter more of the pond water.

With cost-share funding from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), design and technical assistance from NRCS, a grant from the California Department of Fish and Game, and the cooperation of the Shasta Valley RCD and Shasta River CRMP, Meamber is expanding his use of the pond water to an adjacent irrigated pasture and tying the new system into his existing tailwater recovery system. The new system will prevent warm, nutrient rich waters from entering the Shasta River. The irrigated fields will filter the wastewater much better than dry fields because perennial grasses use more of the nitrogen nutrients.

"The beauty of this project is that the NRCS is multitasking here with the Meamber family," said **Ayn Perry**, Soil Conservationist in Yreka. We are addressing a municipal water quality concern, an agricultural water quality concern, and a water conservation issue. And all of these things tie-in together with the endangered species we are working on in the Shasta River system."

When completed, the Montague Clean Water Project will help the city maintain water quality in the Shasta River, help protect endangered fish, and help the rancher save water through recycling. It is a shining example of how EQIP can be used as a catalyst for positive change.

NRCS Outstanding Range Conservationist Of The Year Named

By Dave Sanden
Area Public Affairs Specialist/
Red Bluff

Ceci Dale-Cesmat, Range Conservationist in Susanville, Calif., has been named NRCS Outstanding Range Conservationist of the Year.

Dale-Cesmat was presented with this honor and a plaque at the annual meeting of the **Society for Range Management** (SRM) held recently in Salt Lake City, Utah. She was selected in recognition of her excellence and outstanding achievements in rangeland conservation. The award was presented by **Dennis Thompson**, NRCS Range Program Coordinator, Washington, D.C.

"I was very shocked and honored with this award," said Dale-Cesmat. "It is truly the highlight of my career. Everyday we at NRCS get to do work that we love to do, work



NRCS's Dennis Thompson (left) presents the Range Conservationist of the Year award to Ceci Dale-Cesmat. Photo courtesy of Ceci Dale-Cesmat

that we have a passion for, and to receive an award for this is just so fantastic. My sincere appreciation to whomever nominated me. There are so many others equally deserving for their contribution to conservation."

She has worked as an NRCS Range Conservationist in Susanville since 1986. Before that Dale-Cesmat served with the U.S. Forest Service in the Lassen-Plumas area for 14 years.

To Air Is Human, To Clean It Up Divine

By Brian Ziegler
Area Public Affairs Specialist/Fresno

It's ironic that the greatest agricultural producing area in the nation—the San Joaquin Valley—also has some of the unhealthiest air. Weather and geography play a role in creating the situation, but the Valley's agriculture industry is also a contributor.

That's why NRCS is finding ways to help agriculture reduce the pollution it creates, such as replacing old diesel engines, controlling dust on unpaved farm roads, and chipping orchard prunings instead of burning them. It also promotes conservation tillage, a practice that reduces the number of trips a tractor pulling implements makes across a field.

These solutions are catching on with farmers. In 1998, the first year NRCS provided cost-share funds for air quality improvement, \$294,000 was allocated to growers. Last year, the total was \$5.7 million. The agency received over a thousand requests for funding assistance and more are expected this year.

To keep up with the demand, the NRCS has hired air quality specialists in Kern, Kings, Fresno, Merced, and Stanislaus counties. Their goal is to help the local air pollution control district reduce

NRCS Scores Points At "The Super Bowl"

2004 marked the 63rd anniversary of this popular Red Bluff event

By Dave Sanden
Area Public Affairs
Specialist/Red Bluff

The Red Bluff Bull and Gelding Sale, widely known among cattle people as "the Super Bowl" of Bull sales, is one of the largest, most eagerly anticipated events in the West. Commercial cattlemen (and cattlemen) come to Red Bluff each year from all over the country and beyond to buy bulls consigned from the leading breeders in the industry. Over the years the sale has grown into a gigantic trade show with a fun carnival atmosphere and a wide variety of products and information.

This year marked the 63rd Annual Red Bluff Bull sale, held from January 27-31, and NRCS was well represented by a multi-district, Rangeland Management Specialist team led by **Hedi Carpenter-Harris**, Rangeland Management Specialist from the Eureka Field Office.

emissions by 2010. That's the deadline set by the Environmental Protection Agency for the Valley to comply with federal limits for air quality. Failure to meet that goal will mean the loss of federal highway funds, not to mention continued bouts of pollution-caused asthma and other health problems in young children and the elderly.



Rangeland Management Specialist Hedi Carpenter-Harris braves the cold at the NRCS display to promote programs and answer visitors' questions. Photo: Dave Sanden

The talented team included **Jennifer Golder** from the Red Bluff FO, **Todd Golder** from Redding, **Rob Vlach** from Oroville, **Steve Joauen** from Woodland, and **Ceci Dale-Cesmat** from Susanville.

Team members chatted with visitors about NRCS programs and provided agency publications and other information. The most popular give-away item by far was an NRCS Grazing Record Book, a handy pocket-sized grazing tool that a rancher can use out on the range. Many visitors to the NRCS booth asked about the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (which had a January 30 cutoff date for Fiscal Year 2004), and some even signed up.

The team learned a lot at their Bull Sale experience and plans to return next year.



NRCS Air Quality Specialists (left to right) Dawn Brunmeier, Modesto, Livy Coe, Merced, and Susan Perez, Fresno, attend a training session in Fresno. Photo: Brian Ziegler

Cultural Resources Management: Preserving The Past, Enriching The Future

By Jim Cairns
Public Affairs Specialist/Davis

[Part one in a two-part series, which concludes in the May/June issue.]

It's not Indiana Jones or Lara Croft glamorous. Patience is tested when the going gets slow, tedious and plodding. A passion for people and cultures must smolder at one's core for success. It's rarely a 9-to-5 gig either: Aficionados live it, are almost obsessed—in a good way—by the rich breadth of experience that cultural resources offers.

Frank Deitz is one of those select few who have the opportunity to work in cultural resources management (CRM) for NRCS. Based in the State Office in Davis, he has been the State Cultural Resources Specialist for nearly three years, and a federal archaeologist for almost 20. "Working in cultural resources," Deitz says, "is a daily challenge because I must balance and satisfy legal, ethical and policy requirements." He is also an advocate of cultural resources. "Over the years

I have prevented harm to many archaeological sites," the North Carolina native beams with pride.

Cultural resources is defined by NRCS as the "physical evidence of the past activities and accomplishments of people (individuals and society)." Basically, it's the study of the *who, what, when, where, why* and *how* of society and its artifacts that are over 50 years old. It's considered a non-renewal resource, separated in two distinct categories: Pre-historic—the period before contact with Europeans in the New World, and historic—the time since recorded contact. In Calif., approximately 100 NRCS employees have been trained in CRM, primarily in soil and range conservation and other planning purpose-related positions.

State Forester **Jerry Reioux** from Davis, who is also the State Cultural Resources Coordinator, spent six weeks

last summer participating in archaeological field school through the UC Davis Department of Anthropology. The training was part of his ongoing goal to qualify as a federal archaeologist. "I'd like to have it done by this time next year," states Reioux. Currently, he is only "two to three classes shy of meeting the federal archaeologist designation."

Reioux's field school experience focused on excavating a known **Tolowa Indian village**, at Redwood State/National Park in Del Norte County, that is thought to be between 1,000 and 3,000 years old. All the soil that was excavated from the dig had to be sifted and screened by hand, items cataloged and cleaned, then the artifacts curated and eventually reports written. "A ton of stuff was excavated—over a thousand items," says Reioux.



Frank Deitz, State Cultural Resources Specialist (left) and State Forester Jerry Reioux (center) examining artifacts with Laura Smith, Earth Team Volunteer and archaeology doctoral candidate at UC Davis. Photos: Jim Cairns

Artifacts unearthed by Reioux and the other 20 students and academics, will keep UC Davis researchers busy for years to come. "We found a lot of [fishing] weights and one [obsidian] projectile point that goes back about 5,000 years old," Reioux confides. The information gathered will ultimately help determine North Coast Indian subsistence patterns and shed light on ancient trade routes hypothesized to have existed throughout Calif. and up the coast to the Northwest.

Lights! Cameras! Conservation!

By Brian Ziegler
Area Public Affairs Specialist/Fresno

TV cameras focus on NRCS at World Ag Expo

It may have been the talented people staffing the booth. Or maybe it was their colorful, spinning wheel of fortune. Either way the NRCS exhibit at the recent World Ag Expo proved popular with Fresno TV stations.

Employees from the Visalia and Madera field offices took turns manning the exhibit throughout the three-day event. Billed as the largest farm equipment show in the world, over 100,000 people attended the show and NRCS was there to promote conservation.

One show highlight came when **Kopi Sotiropulos**, KMPH-TV's weatherman, asked NRCS exhibitors **Eric Crook**, **Joe Williams**, **Elizabeth Palmer**, **Pam Nielsen**, **Chu Yang** and **Jenny Gabor** to introduce his five-day extended weather forecast.

After a few dress rehearsals, the camera rolled and the group proclaimed to the viewing audience that "we're ready for Kopi's five-day weather forecast!" The segment aired during the FOX affiliate's 10 p.m. newscast.

The exhibitors were also featured in news footage shot by CBS affiliate KGPE-TV and Spanish-language outlet KFTV-TV.



NRCS field office staff from Visalia and Madera introduce a five-day weather forecast on Fresno FOX affiliate KMPH-TV during the World Ag Expo in Tulare. Pictured are (clockwise, upper left): Eric Crook, Joe Williams, Elizabeth Palmer, Jenny Gabor, Chu Yang and Pam Nielsen. Photo: Brian Ziegler

"Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood."

—From Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speech, "I Have a Dream," Aug. 28, 1963



The 2004 Black History Month poster (above) features Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American Supreme Court Justice, and children on the steps of the Supreme Court. In 1954, Marshall won the landmark case *Brown vs. Board of Education*, which demolished the legal basis for segregation in the U.S.

Black History Month Commemorates Landmark Case

By Curtis Tarver
Area 3 ASTCFO/Fresno

February is the month that Americans celebrate Black History, and the theme this year was the 50th anniversary of the case of *Brown vs. Board of Education*.

The case was heard by the Supreme Court, which ruled that racial segregation in public schools violated the U.S. Constitution. The decision paved the way for desegregation and equal education. The plaintiff's case was argued by Thurgood Marshall, later to become the first black Supreme Court justice.

In Focus

Bell, Feinstein's Staff Tour EWP Projects



NRCS State Conservationist Chuck Bell toured wildfire burned areas of San Diego County on January 23, with U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein's field representative, Mathew Kostrinsky. The tour, led by Escondido District Conservationist Jason Jackson and Ag Engineer

Jason Smith, focused on completed "Urgent and Compelling" projects and other Emergency Watershed Program (EWP) work in progress. Additional attendees included Dave Heilig, Area 4 Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations, and Marty Leavitt, District Manager of RCD of Greater San Diego County.

During the five-hour tour, many southern Calif. tree mortality and EWP issues were updated for Kostrinsky by Bell, including fuel management strategies, bark beetle infestation and tree mortality, upcoming tree removal and disposal methods, and NRCS's Conservation Technical Assistance and EWP programs. Project highlights were identified and inspected during site visits, such as hydro-seeding and other re-vegetation efforts in Ramona, and water-filled K-rail uses on the Barona Indian Nation.

Pictured above are (from left to right) Mathew Kostrinsky, Dave Heilig, Chuck Bell, Jason Jackson, Jason Smith (rear) and Marty Leavitt (front). *Photo: Jim Cairns*

A Citizen's Water Quality Monitoring Program

By Sierra Harris
Biologist/Escondido

Fallbrook, Calif., located in northern San Diego County, is home to acres of avocado orchards and the Mission Resource Conservation District (MRCD). **Beth Brock** doubles as the District's Water Quality Coordinator and an Earth Team Volunteer Coordinator. Currently, she manages the Home₂Ocean program, a 14-month water quality monitoring grant for the Santa Margarita River watershed. The grant is funded primarily through the State Water Resources Control Board. Additional support is provided by San Diego County and Riverside Flood Control. The program provides general public education on regional water quality issues and gives citizens living within the watershed an opportunity to learn how to test water quality parameters.

The program currently has eight **NRCS Earth Team** volunteers

assisting with water quality monitoring. The volunteers are local citizens from a wide variety of backgrounds and interests who share a common concern for the preservation and well being of the Santa Margarita River watershed. Twice monthly over the past seven months, two to three volunteers sampled water from three areas: The main stem of the Santa Margarita River, Stone Creek and Rainbow Creek. Stone and Rainbow Creeks are both tributaries of the Santa Margarita River.

In the field, the volunteers collect data on dissolved oxygen, water temperature, turbidity, pH, and other factors. Water samples are taken back to MRCD for further tests, and a certified laboratory also tests samples for total coliform bacteria and *E. coli*. Twice yearly, the volunteers also survey for benthic macroinvertebrates. These tests will help determine how much



Earth Team Volunteers (left to right) Nancy Buchmeier, Barry Lindgren and Megan Moore measuring the velocity of Rainbow Creek in San Diego County. *Photo courtesy Beth Brock, MRCD*

agricultural and residential run-off is flowing into the Santa Margarita River. This is important information as the river provides a majority of the drinking water for the Marines at Camp Pendleton.

Overall, these volunteers are contributing to a valuable long-term study on the health of the watershed where they live. The data will help identify possible causes of non-point source pollution into the Santa Margarita River. These Earth Team volunteers are excellent stewards of their local watershed and are to be commended for their efforts.

Caligrams

Statewide News In Brief



American Indian Liaison Reina Rogers illustrates a point during the Sacramento event. Photo: Marsha Gery

NRCS, Tribal Nations Building Communication

By Marsha Gery
Public Affairs Director/Davis

NRCS is committed to respecting our government-to-government relations with individual Calif. tribal nations, and providing timely and professional technical assistance.

Reina Rogers, NRCS American Indian Liaison, joined representatives from the Cortina Reservation to welcome 17 Calif. tribal representatives at the February 25th summit held in Sacramento. Attendees were divided into groups to meet with appropriate local NRCS staff and discuss programs, issues and other concerns.

Linden Brooks, Area 1 Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations, noted, "The opportunity for discussion with tribal representatives from my area really set the stage to hear their needs. I have transcribed my notes and have directly provided the information to relevant field offices in Area 1. We will follow through addressing questions and concerns."

A tribal representative from Tuolumne said, "This has been amazing...about the first time a government agency listened to us. I actually walked away with four potential programs or solutions instead of nothing."

NRCS will continue to coordinate tribal summits. For more information, contact Reina Rogers at reina.rogers@c.a.usda.gov.



NRCS's Linden Brooks: "We will follow through addressing questions and concerns." Photo: Marsha Gery



During the Black History Month celebration, Curtis Tarver surprised Charles Davis, NRCS State Engineer, with recognition of his many years of quality and tireless work in the field and his positive encouragement working as a mentor to other engineers and co-workers. Photo: Marsha Gery

Stand With Me

By Marsha Gery
Public Affairs Director/Davis

Over 45 NRCSers and partners joined together at the Davis State Office in late February to celebrate Black History Month. Curtis Tarver, NRCS Black Emphasis Program Manager, led the celebration commemorating the 50th anniversary of the landmark Brown vs. Board of Education case, which ended racial segregation in public schools and paved the way for desegregation.

A 10-minute video presentation provided an historical overview of the events surrounding the groundbreaking Supreme Court case.

Participants valiantly tried to sing along with the Black National Anthem, "Lift Every Voice and Sing," and with "Survive," by Hezekiah Walker. If the harmony wasn't there, the spirit and thoughtfulness of the group certainly made up for it.



"Go West" Campaign Brings NOPBNRCSE Conference To Calif. In 2004

By Reina O'Beck
Public Affairs Specialist/Davis

The West Region Chapter of the NOPBNRCSE (National Organization of Professional Black NRCS Employees) will host the 12th Annual Training Conference in Calif. in December 2004. The "Go West" campaign, sponsored by the West Region Chapter, helped secure the conference site location. This is the first conference to be held in Calif.

In 1992, a Black Employees Program Manager meeting in San Diego created the actual structure of NOPBNRCSE, but the organization did not yet exist. The West Region will implement new additions to the training component of the conference next year, such as off-site tours.

HR Personnel Actions

Name	Position	Action	Grade	Location	Date
Bruce Englehart	Res Consvst	New Hire	GS-11	Riverside	2/8/04
Jane Hopkins	Ag Engr	New Hire	GS-9	Modesto	2/22/04
James Tillman	Deputy STC	Promo from TX	GS-15	Davis	2/22/04
Jeremy Svehla	Ag Engr	Conv to Perm Appt	GS-7	Eureka	1/11/04
Daniel Tarverner	Soil Consvst	Conv to Perm Appt	GS-7	Grass Valley	1/25/04
Tracy McDermott	Human Res Spc	Career Promo	GS-11	Davis	1/11/04
Jennifer Sternfels	Soil Consvst	Career Promo	GS-9	Petaluma	1/11/04
Dean Smith	Soil Consvst	Career Promo	GS-11	Somis	2/8/04
Jason Smith	Ag Engr	Career Promo	GS-9	Escondido	2/8/04
Robert Vlach	Range Mgmt Spc	Career Promo	GS-9	Oroville	2/22/04
Tim Lieninger	Soil Scntst	Career Promo	GS-12	Davis	3/21/04
Jennifer Faler	Wetlands Engr	Transfer to RD	GS-11	Elk Grove	1/11/04
Phuc Vu	Ag Engr	Transfer to OR	GS-11	Salinas	3/7/04
Gerald Hubatka	Soil Consv Techn	Retirement	GS-9	Redding	2/5/04